

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

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-----033260 021531Z /46
O 021300Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7730

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 17177

EXDIS

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: SCHEDULE

REF: STATE 286983

1. I WAS DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN FROM REFTTEL THAT THE ABANDON-
MENT OF A VILLAGE VISIT IS UNDER
CONSIDERATION. KEEPING IN PERSPECTIVE THAT A VISIT TO A
VILLAGE IS BUT ONE OF THE COMPONENTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S
SCHEDULE IN NEW DELHI, I NONETHELESS CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT
THE ADVANTAGES OF A VISIT ARE SUCH AS TO WARRANT RESTATEMENT
AND SOME ELABORATION.

2. A VISIT TO AN INDIAN VILLAGE, WHETHER IT BE THE ONE WHICH
WE HAVE TENTATIVELY PICKED AS A POSSIBILITY OR SOME OTHER
VILLAGE IN THE SAME AREA WHICH THE INDIANS MIGHT SUGGEST,
WOULD BE THE ONLY OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PRESIDENT TO SEE AT
FIRST HAND THE RURAL POOR OF INDIA. ADMITTEDLY THE CIVIC
RECEPTION WILL BRING HIM INTO CONTACT WITH A VAST CROWD, BUT
THE SETTING WILL BE URBAN AND SECURITY AND MEDIA CONSIDERA-
TIONS WILL MITIGATE AGAINST ANY PERSONAL CONTACT.

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3. AS SOME OF THE PRE-ADVANCE PARTY SUCCINCTLY OBSERVED
WHILE THEY WERE IN NEW DELHI IN OCTOBER, "THE CAPITAL OF INDIA
LOOKS LIKE A BIG GARDEN SET WITH ATTRACTIVE BRICK BUILDINGS."
THE CAPITAL AREA IS CERTAINLY NOT TYPICAL OF INDIA. A VILLAGE VISIT
WILL BE UNDERSTOOD AND WELCOMED, ESPECIALLY BY THOSE INDIANS
FAMILIAR WITH THE PRESIDENT'S BACKGROUND, AS A NATURAL OUT-
GROWTH OF HIS INTEREST IN RURAL LIFE AND PROBLEMS. I BELIEVE

IT WOULD BE VIEWED AS AN INTEGRAL, INDEED INDISPENSABLE,
PART OF HIS GETTING TO KNOWN INDIA.

4. A VILLAGE VISIT COULD PROJECT A VERY IMPORTANT DIMENSION
OF THE PRESIDENT'S ENCOUNTER WITH INDIA. INDIA IS PREDOMI-
NANTLY A LAND OF VILLAGES. EIGHTY PERCENT OF INDIA'S POPU-
LATION LIVES IN OVER HALF A MILLION VILLAGES. SUCH A SIVIST
WOULD THEREFORE DEMONSTRATE HIS INTEREST IN ALL THE PEOPLE
OF INDIA AND WOULD, IN MY VIEW, WIDEN CONSIDERABLY THE IMPACT
OF HIS PRESENCE HERE. INDIA'S LEADERS AND CITIZENS ALIKE
WOULD BE DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY THE FACT THAT AN AMERICAN
PRESIDENT HAS CHOSEN TO GET HIS SHOES DUSTY AND TO COME FACE
TO FACE WITH THE RURAL REALITY OF THE COUNTRY.

5. THE DESAI GOVERNMENT IS ON RECORD AS PLEDGED TO DEVOT-
ING INCREASED RESOURCES TO AGRICULTURE, COTTAGE INDUSTRIES
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT. IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF OUR ANTICI-
PATED DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN INDIA BOTH CONGES-
SIONAL MANDATE AND EXECUTIVE POLICY CALL FOR CONCENTRATING
OUR EFFORTS ON PROGRAMS WHICH WILL REACH AND HELP THE POOREST
SEGMENTS OF INDIAN SOCIETY. IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT SUCH A
POLICY INEVITABLY MEANS CONCENTRATION ON THE NEEDS OF THE
RURAL POOR.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 17177

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WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

6. THE DRAMA OF INDIA'S EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC GROWTH
WITH JUSTICE IS BEING PLAYED OUT PRIMARILY IN HER VILLAGES.
FORTY PERCENT OF INDIA'S NATIONAL INCOME IS DERIVED FROM
AGRICULTURE, AND THE GREAT MAJORITY OF HER POOREST PEOPLE
LIVE IN RURAL AREAS. A VILLAGE VISIT WOULD SYMBOLIZE THE

AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO ATTACKING THE PROBLEMS OF HUNGER, DISEASE AND ILLITERACY IN THE WORLD.

7. ONE OF THE MAJOR THEMES OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO INDIA, AS WE SEE IT, IS TO STRENGTHEN THE CASE THAT DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND A CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT ONLY COMPATIBLE WITH A SATISFACTORY RATE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUT SUPPORTIVE OF SUCH DEVELOPMENT. THE RECENT ELECTIONS IN INDIA OFFERED A DRAMATIC REBUTTAL OF THE CONVENTIONAL ARGUMENT THAT THE POOR OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE INTERESTED ONLY IN GETTING ENOUGH TO EAT AND PAY SCANT HEED TO POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHT ISSUES. IT IS COMMONPLACE, BUT IT IS STILL TRUE, THAT THIS AFFIRMATION OF DEMOCRACY SPRANG FROM THE VILLAGES OF INDIA. THUS, A VILLAGE VISIT WOULD DRAMATICALLY AFFIRM THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT TO THE CENTRAL THEME OF THE PROPOSED JOINT DECLARATION -- MAN'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS -- AND, IF IT TOOK PLACE ON TUESDAY MORNING, WOULD BE AN EVOCATIVE BACKDROP TO THE SUBSEQUENT SIGNING OF THAT DOCUMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

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8. WE HAVE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO RELATE A VILLAGE VISIT TO SPECIFIC MULTILATERAL OR US ASSISTANCE PROJECTS. THE WORLD BANK HAS NO VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT PACKAGES; ITS ASSISTANCE IS DIRECTED TOWARD AGRICULTURAL CREDIT, IRRIGATION AND IMPROVED EXTENSION SERVICES. ALSO, THE BANK'S INPUT IS CURRENTLY IN WEST BENGAL, RAJASTHAN, ASSAM, ORISSA, MADHYA PRADESH, NONE OF WHICH IS ADJACENT TO NEW DELHI. WE KNOW OF NO VILLAGE WITHIN A FIFTY MILE RADIUS OF NEW DELHI WHICH IS, OR HAS BEEN, A US VOLUNTARY AGENCY PROJECT VILLAGE.

9. IF A VILLAGE VISIT REMAINS ON THE SCHEDULE, I THINK IT WOULD BE MORE IMPORTANT TO COME UP WITH A TYPICAL VILLAGE, EASY OF ACCESS AND CONVENIENT TO NEW DELHI, THAN A VILLAGE THAT HAS BEEN THE RECIPIENT OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE: IN OTHER WORDS A PRISTINE VILLAGE NOT YET VISITED BY A FOREIGN VIP AND ONE WHICH IS MOVING TOWARD MODERNIZATION AS A RESULT OF LOCAL, SELF-GENERATED EFFORT.

10. I VISUALIZE A VILLAGE VISIT AS TAKING SOMEWHAT THE FOLLOWING COURSE:

A. A HALF-HOUR DRIVE FROM NEW DELHI DURING WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE PRESIDENT COULD POSSIBLY DISCUSS AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT. THIS, OF COURSE, ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT DESAI WOULD ACCOMPANY THE PRESIDENT.

B. A BRIEF CEREMONY UPON ARRIVAL AT THE VILLAGE WHEN THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE GARLANDED, GREET THE VILLAGE ELDERS AND PERHAPS TAKE A QUICK LOOK AT AN OUTSIDE CLASS OF THE ELE-

MENTARY SCHOOL.

C. A WALK-ABOUT WHICH WOULD INCLUDE A CHANCE TO SEE THE
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CRUDE BUT TYPICAL STRUCTURES USED TO STORE GRAIN; A TUBE-WELL
IN OPERATION; THE VILLAGE LIVESTOCK, MOST WATER BUFFALO AND
CATTLE BUT INCLUDING A NUMBER OF MUD CHICKEN COOPS; A VILLAGE
HOUSE (THE MOST ATTRACTIVE HOUSE IN DAULATPUR BELONGS TO AN
UNTOUCHABLE: A GOOD CASE OF UPWARD MOBILITY); A SMALL FLOUR
MILL OPERATED WITHIN A FAMILY COMPOUND; A TYPICAL HOLE-IN-THE-
WALL VILLAGE SHOP, AND THE VILLAGE WELL. PRESUMABLY PRIME
MINISTER DESAI WOULD ACT AS THE PRESIDENT'S GUIDE DURING SUCH
A WALK.

11. ANY VILLAGE SELECTED PROMISES TO BE DUSTY, DIRTY AND
SMELLY. BUT I THINK THAT A VISIT TO SUCH A VILLAGE WOULD,
FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF ITS IMPACT ON INDIANS, PROVIDE A
DESIRABLE ADDED DIMENSION TO THE PRESIDENT'S STAY IN INDIA.
I AM NOT AS COMPETENT TO JUDGE ITS IMPACT ON THE US AUDIENCE
WHICH WOULD BE FOLLOWING THE PRESIDENT'S TRAVELS, BUT I WOULD
GUESS THAT THE VISUAL IMAGES WOULD BE STRICKINGLY DIFFERENT
FROM THOSE PROJECTED BY THE PROTOCOL EVENTS ON THE SCHEDULE.
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